

RIDDLES

12

I move on my feet, I break up the ground,
the green meadows, as long as I live.
If life leaves me I then bind fast
the swarthy Welsh, and sometimes better men.
Sometimes I give drink to a strong man
from out of my bosom. Sometimes the stately dame
treads me underfoot. Sometimes the Welsh girl,
dark-haired slave brought from afar,
stupid and drunk, on dark nights
lifts me and presses me, soaks me in water,
warms me sometimes kindly by the fire,
her wanton hands thrust in my bosom;
turning often sweeps through the dark.
Say what my name is who living ravage
the land, and dead am of service to men.

25

I'm a wonderful thing, a joy to women,
to neighbors useful. I injure no one
who lives in a village save only my slayer.
I stand up high and steep over the bed;
underneath I'm shaggy. Sometimes ventures
a young and handsome peasant's daughter,
a maiden proud, to lay hold on me.
She seizes me, red, plunders my head,
fixes on me fast, feels straightway
what meeting me means when she thus approaches,
a curly-haired woman. Wet is that eye.

46

He sat at his wine with his two wives
and his two sons and his two daughters,
the beloved sisters, and their two sons,
goodly first born. The father of each
of these noble ones was there and there
also
an uncle and a nephew. Five in all,
men and women, were sitting together.

51

I saw four things in beautiful fashion
journeying together. Dark were their tracks,
the path very black. Swift was its moving,
faster than birds it flew through the air,
dove under the wave. Labored unresting
the fighting warrior who showed them the way,
all of the four, over plated gold.

54

A youth came along to where he knew
she stood in a corner. Forth he strode,
a vigorous young man, lifted up her own
dress with his hands, thrust under her girdle
something stiff as she stood there;
worked his will; both of them shook.
A thane hurried up, useful at times,
a capable servant; nonetheless he grew tired
from time to time, though strong at first,
weary with work. Beneath the girdle
there began to grow what often good men
love heartily and buy with money.

Fotum ic fere foldan slite
grene wongas þenden ic gæst bere
gif me feorh losað fæste binde
swearte wealas, hwilum sellan men
hwilum ic deorum drincan selle
beorn of bosme hwilum mec bryd triedeð
felawlonc fotum hwilum feorran broht
wonfeax wale wegeð □ þyð
dol druncmennen deorcum nihtū
wæteð in wætre wyrmeð hwilum
fægre to fyre me on fæðme sticaf
hygegalan hond hwyrfeð geneahhe
swifeð me geond sweartne Saga hwæt ic hatte
þe ic lifgende lond reafige
□ æfter deaþe dryhtum þeowige

Ic eom wunderlicu wiht wifum on hyhte
neahbuendū nyt nængum sceþþe
burgsittendra nymþe bonan anum
staþol min is steapheah stonde ic on bedde
neoþan ruh nathwær neþeð · hwilum
ful cyrtenu · ceorles dohtor
modwlonc meowle þ heo on mec gripeð
ræseð mec on reodne reafað min heafod
fegeð mec on fæsten feleþ sona
mines gemotes seþe mec nearwað
wif wundēn locc wæt bið þæt eage.

Wær sæt æt wine mid his wifum · twam
□ his twegen suno □ his twa dohtor
swase gesweostor □ hyre suno twegen
freolico frumbearn fæder wæs þær Inne
þara æþelinga æghwæðres mid
eam □ nefa ealra wæron fife
eorla □ idesa Insittendra

Ic seah wrætlice wuhte feower
samed siþian swearte · wæran lastas
swaþu swiþe blacu swift wæs on fore
fulgum framra fleotgan lyfte
deaf under yþe dreag unstill
winnende wiga se him wægæs tæcneþ
ofer fæted gold feower eallū

Hyse cwom gangan · þær he hie wisse
standan · In winc sele stop feorran to
hror hægstealdmon hof his agen
hrægl hondum up · rand under gyrdels
hyre stondendre stiþes nathwæt
worhte his willan wagedan buta
þegn onnette wæs þragum nyt ·
tillic esne teorode hwæþre
æt stunda · gehwam strong ær þon hie ð ·
werig þæs weorces hyre weaxan ongon
under gyrdelse þæt oft gode men
ferðpum freogað □ mid feo bicgað